

## SAMPLE LETTER

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December xx, 2014

Dear Parents,

The Florida Department of Health reports that the 2014-2015 flu season is off to an early start and Floridians are urged to get vaccinated to protect themselves and others against the flu. Activity levels are highest in children but overall influenza activity is widely spread across the state. The Department is encouraging families to get their flu vaccine.

**The flu vaccine is safe and continues to be the best way to protect yourself and others from the flu.** The flu vaccine is offered in many locations including pharmacies, clinics, employers and schools. Contact your physician, county health department or visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/prevention/flu-prevention/locate-a-flu-shot.html> to find a flu vaccine center near you. The national Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that all individuals six months of age and older receive the flu vaccine each year. Since infants younger than 6 months of age are too young to get vaccinated against influenza, it is important that family members (including pregnant mothers) and other caregivers for these children be vaccinated to help protect them from the disease.

**It is especially important that people who do become infected with the influenza virus stay home when they are sick and parents keep sick children at home to prevent spreading the flu.** As a reminder our school's exclusion policy is [Insert language].

Additional steps to prevent flu include coughing or sneezing into a tissue or your elbow, washing your hands frequently, and keeping your hands away from your face. Symptoms of the flu include headache, fever, severe cough, runny nose or body aches. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, see your primary care provider immediately for guidance on treatment. Early treatment with antivirals is important and can help people get better more quickly as well as help to prevent severe complications.

**The best way to keep yourself and your family safe and healthy during flu season is to: 1) Get vaccinated, 2) Stay home if you are sick, and 3) See your doctor if experiencing flu-like symptoms.**

For more information please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/parents/index.htm>.

Sincerely,